CLARK DENIES INTERFERENCE

U. S. Attorney General Talks to Miss. Bar

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(The Times-Picayune Staff Correspondent)

BILOXI, Miss.—Attorney General Ramsey Clark said here Thursday the Justice Department has "absolutely not" interferred in District Attorney Jim Garrison's probe of an alleged conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

Clark, here to address the Mississippi State Bar, said he "basically would not comment" on the Garrison probe.

Asked about a report that the identity of Clem Bertrand had been turned over to the Justice Department, Clark said only, "We'll investigate whenever we find any violation of federal law."

The attorney general said the Justice Department has "under consideration but no decision has been made" on the possibility of sending federal observers into Mississippi for the August gubernatorial primaries.

He said, however, that "there will probably be observers but only on a need basis in individual counties." Federal registrars have been assigned to 31 counties in Mississippi.

Clark intimated that his department has strong reservations about proposed federal legislation aimed at agitators who travel in interstate commerce and precipitate riots.

"We have no evidence that state laws are not adequate to take care of this situation," Clark said, "and, of course, there are two difficulties about federal legislation of this kind. "First is proof and intent of a person who is traveling in interstate commerce and then proof of what he did after he got there."

The use of federal marshals to enforce such legislation is "just not realistic at all." He pointed out that there are "not more than 750 marshals and deputies throughout the country."

He won applause in his talk at the junior bar section Thursday when he declared: "Law enforcement is and always should be a local responsibility."

Clark cited the need for the legal profession throughout the country to guarantee the representation for all persons "or our rights are not secure.

"We have to know that Negro and white, poor, rural and urban, have equal representation."

He said the major problem of crime now lies in the youth of the country which he said 64 per cent of the crimes are being committed. "Youth is where we have to work," he said.

He added: "What could be more important to the legal profession than instilling respect for the law and what could be more important to our society than our youth?"

The recently named attorney general is the son of former U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Tom Clark, who recently conducted a clinic for the legal profession in Mississippi at the University of Mississippi.

Clark is the first attorney general of the United States to be invited to speak before the Mississippi State Bar in modern history.

In recent years, during the upsurge of the racial issue, Mississippi's lawyers have been highly critical of the attorney general of the United States.